



India Business Leaders Forum

The Auckland Chamber of Commerce hosted an India Business Leaders Forum roundtable session on the eve of a state visit to India by Prime Minister of New Zealand H.E. Mr John Key at the invitation of the Prime Minister of India, Dr. Manmohan Singh.

The India Business Leaders Forum was attended by a wide range of stakeholders representing governmental agencies and industries such as food and beverage, dairy, transport infrastructure, building and education.

The Forum included lively discussion based around opportunities and challenges faced by traders in market. This included issues relating to taxes, duties, tariffs, customs clearance and effective pricing and distribution strategies. The Forum was attended by the Lead Negotiator of the New Zealand- India Free Trade Agreement and Ministry of Foreign Affairs Director of Trade Negotiations Division, Mr. Nigel Fyfe, who was able to provide a ministerial update on the state of the Free Trade negotiations and answer questions relating to these topics.

Mr. Fyfe noted that negotiations on goods had not yet commenced and that issues raised would be addressed in the next round of negotiations. This round is scheduled for August, will be held in New Zealand and will cover goods and technical barriers to trade.

The Forums discussions were based around key issues faced by traders. These included:

- Tariffs and Duties
- The importance of in market representation- either through local partners, distributors and agents.
- On the ground barriers to trade including fluctuating taxes and the adverse affect that these ever changing rates have on the process of negotiating sales contracts and setting competitive pricing strategies.
- Mutual recognition of specialized professions and degrees.
- Customs clearance and the length of time that goods are stuck on the wharf. Mr. Fyfe noted that MFAT is working towards the "Customs facilitation chapter".
- Issues relating to 'conditions of contract' were discussed; these were based on the services sector.
- The cultural and economic significance of investing time in building strong relationships with local partners.